

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY SANA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9194

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANA 3400

STADIS//////////

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, MILI, YE

SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING

REF: STATE 238546

1. VERY MUCH APPRECIATE REFTEL. FOLLOWING PARAS KEYED  
TO QUESTIONS REAISED IN REFTEL.

2. WE ESTIMATE THAT SINCE REVOLUTION BETWEEN 1,000 AND  
1,200 YEMENIS, MOSTLY OFFICER, HAVE BEEN EDUCATED IN  
SOVIET UNION. MOSTLY SINCE 1967, WHEN THE EGYPTIANS LEFT.  
WE ARE USING U.S. SOURCES FOR THIS FIGURE. YEMENI RECORDS  
ARE NOT VERY GOOD. IN ANY CASE, OUR ESTIMATE IS COSERVATIVE.  
OTHR EMBASSIES HERE PUT THE FIGURE MUCH HIGHER. WHAT  
IS CLEARER IS THAT 1,000 IS 20 PERCENT OF THE  
OFFICER CORPS.

3. WE ESTIMATE THAT ABOUT 100 YEMENIS ARE NOW IN  
TRAINING IN USSR. YEMENIS DECIDED LAST YEAR TO END SUCH  
TRAINING BUT THEN, AFTER SHARP DIPSUTE WITH SAUDI ARABIA,  
WHICH LED TO NEW ARMS AGREEMENT WITH SOVIETS IN  
NOVMEBER 1975, NEW TRAINEES WERE SENT TOHQSSR, ESPECIALLY  
AIR FORCE PILOT TRAINEES FOR MIG-21'S. MOST OF THESE MEN  
HAVE NOW BEEN RETURNED, IN LINE WITH PRESENT, VERY GOOD  
RELATIONS WITH SAUDIS AND SLOW-DOWN IN SOVIET ARMS  
DELIVERIES.

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4. WE HAD HARD EVIDENCE THAT EARLIER THIS YEAR SOVIETS

OFFERED 880 MILITARY TRAINING SPACES, WITH 220 EARMARKED FOR FIRST YEAR. YEMENIS HAVE TOLD US THEY WILL DECLINE THIS OFFER BUT THEY ARE LOOKING TO U.S. AND SAUDIS TO FILL THE VACUUM.

5. WE CANNOT BREAK DOWN TRAINING, EITHER PAST OR PRESENT, INTO GENERAL OR EQUIPMENT-RELATED CATEGORIES.

6. WE BELIEVE YARG ARMED FORCES CAN AND WILL NOMINATE 40 OR MORE OFFICERS A YEAR WHO HAVE POTENTIAL ABSORB U.S. TRAINING AND MAKE MOST OF IT UPON RETURN. FIRST 14 OFFICERS, WHO WENT TO U.S. S. LAST MONTH, WERE ALL BUT ONE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES AND, IN NINE CASES, HAD ALSO GRADUATED FROM SMALL BUT GOOD THREE-YEAR MILITARY COLLEGE HERE IN SAN. ENGLISH IS A STUMBLING BLOCK.

7. TRAINING IN YEMEN IS NECESSARY IF EQUIPMENT TO BE DELIVERED STARTING THIS ALL IS NOT TO BE MISUSED. IT IS IMPORTANT, MOREOVER, AS A WAY TO ACCELERATE AND MAKE PERMANENT THE YARG WILLINGNESS TO UNTIE THEMSELVES FROM THEIR TRADITIONAL AND PERVASIVE TIES TO THE SOVIETS AND THE RADICAL ARABS. FOURTEEN YEMENIS WHO HAVE GONE SO FAR ARE ONLY A FIRST STEP IN THIS DIRECTION BUT WE ARE COUNTING ON THEM TO GIVE US, AND OUR SAUDI FRIENDS, IMPROVED ACCESS TO YEMENI MILITARY AND SECURITY INSTITUTIONS, WHICH ARE THE ARBITERS OF POWER IN THIS MODERNIZING LAND. MOREOVER, GIVEN THE LONG LEADTIMES IN DELIVERIES FROM THE U.S. TRAINING WILL PROVIDE THE SAUDI/US PACKAGE MUCH OF THE CRUCIAL INITIAL IMPACT THAT WE SEEK.

8. PURSUANT TO STATE 023964, CHARGE AND DATT DISCUSSED TRAINING WITH YARG OFFICIALS. SANA 0469 APPLIES. WE HAD TO MAKE CLEAR HOW MANY MEN MIGHT BE TRAINED IN WHAT COURSES, AND THUS STRICTLY ILLUSTRATIVE PLANNING FIGURE OF \$500,000 WAS USED. BUT NO RPT NO COMMITMENT WAS MADE TO THAT FIGURE, MORAL OR OTHERWISE. WE CAREFULLY EXPLAINED TO YEMENIS THAT CONGRESSIONAL APPROPRIATION OR DEPARTMENTAL ALLOCATION MIGHT REDUCE THE AMOUNT. POINT WHICH WAS PARAMOUNT, AND THAT BOTH RPT BOTH SIDES

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UNDERSTOOD, IS THAT U.S. TRAINING WOULD BEGIN PROMPTLY AND WITH FURTHER UNDEFINED U.S. AND SAUDI FUNDING, GROW TO BE IMPORTANT NEW ELEMENT IN YARG MILITARY AND RE-EQUIPMENT PROGRAM.

SCOTES

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